

REMARKS

Claims 14-17 are pending in this application. Claim 14 has been amended to correct a typographical error in the original claim. Claims 14-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b); claim 17 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). In view of the following remarks, the Applicants respectfully submit that the claims 14-17 are in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Pending claims 14-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Cross (U.S. Patent No. 6,144,726). As amended, claims 14-16 are directed to methods of verifying repair facility charges billed to an equipment owner by a repair agent. The claimed systems provide solutions to the problems faced by equipment owners and repair agents in verifying charges for repairs of equipment, such as railcars. For example, claims 14-16 each require facilitating repair agent review of and response to the billing exception records via the billing verifications system. The claims also require generating a billing exception response record for one or more repair agent responses and notifying the equipment owner of the repair agent responses.

Cross does not teach or suggest these features of claims 14-16. Cross describes a telecommunications access cost management system; it does not relate to verification of repair charges at all. Cross does not teach or suggest facilitating repair agent review of and response to the billing exception records via the billing verifications system. Nor does Cross teach or suggest generating a billing exception response record for one or more repair agent responses and notifying the customer of the repair agent responses. For at least these reasons, Cross does not anticipate claims 1, 2, or 5.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Pending claim 17 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cross in view of Barich (U.S. Patent No. 6,955,100). Like claims 14-16, described above, claim 17 is directed to a method of verifying repair facility charges billed to an equipment owner by a repair agent. Claim 17 includes the same limitations described above, including facilitating repair agent review of and response to the billing exception records via the billing verifications system. Claim 17 also requires generating a billing exception response record for one or more repair agent responses and notifying the equipment owner of the repair agent responses.

As noted above, Cross does not teach or suggest these features. Barich does not remedy these deficiencies in the Cross disclosure. For at least these reasons, claim 17 is patentable over the cited art.

Summary

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance and seek early allowance thereof. If for any reason, the Examiner is unable to allow the application in the next Office Action and believes that an interview would be helpful to resolve any remaining issues, he is respectfully requested to contact the attorney on record, Charles M. McMahon, at (312) 321-4782.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Charles M. McMahon', followed by a long horizontal line.

Charles M. McMahon
Registration No. 44,926
Attorney for Applicants

BRINKS HOFER GILSON & LIONE
P.O. BOX 10395
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60610
(312) 321-4200